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SENSITIVE
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SUBJECT: OPEN SKIES: DECEMBER 14 PLENARY, REVCON, AND
SENSORS

¶1. (SBU) Summary: The December 14 Open Skies Consultative Commission (OSCC) adopted the annual decision on distribution of OSCC expenses. There was broad support for the OSCC modality proposals by Hungary and Luxembourg, but both agreed to wait until January to discuss a more comprehensive draft being prepared by the U.S. After the plenary, the second meeting of the Informal Working Group on Planning the Review Conference (IWGPRC) met to discuss the agenda and Final Document for the June 2010 meeting. The Informal Working Group on Sensors (IWGS) held a series of meetings, resulting in progress on digital sensor issues. Germany is reconsidering its future aircraft options. The first OSCC of 2010 will be on January 25, under Canadian Chairmanship. End summary.

¶2. (SBU) The OSCC held its final meeting of 2009 on December 14, concluding the Bulgarian (Iliev) chairmanship. The OSCC adopted the 2010 Scale of Distribution of Expenses for the OSCC (OSCC.DEC/9/09). The Chair took note of the draft decision on the agenda regarding a change to the OSCC working modalities put forward by Luxembourg (OSCC.DEL/9/09). Luxembourg advanced this draft following the scheduling issues experienced in October when the OSCC needed to hold two plenaries in one month. The U.S. (Neighbour) indicated its support in principle for the Luxembourg recommendation, and noted that we had told the Chair prior to the meeting that Washington is working on a comprehensive draft that takes the Luxembourg (Pilot) proposal into account, as well as several other OSCC "housekeeping" issues. Luxembourg agreed to defer further discussion until the January meeting, and welcomed the U.S. drafting efforts.

¶3. (SBU) The draft Decision put forward originally by Hungary for changes to notifications formats 8 and 19, was also deferred on the same basis (OSCC.DD/9/09). On the margins we discussed the substance of the format change proposals with Hungary (Szatmari), and recommended they present the actual text of the format as it would be adopted for review by the OSCC. Mission recommends providing assistance with a revision to this draft accordingly.

¶4. (SBU) Comment: Consultations with key delegations (Bulgaria, Hungary, Luxembourg, Germany, Russia, and Canada) indicate support for an update to the OSCC modalities. Mission welcomes a draft for review by delegations in advance of the January plenary. End Comment.

¶5. (SBU) Russia (Federyakov) made a statement concerning

invoices it has received from Euro Control (air traffic) for several missions (OSCC50.JOUR/160, Annex). According to OSCC Decision on Costs, Open Skies Treaty missions are exempt from air traffic control fees. Russia requested that the OSCC Chair send a letter to Euro Control advising them of the Treaty regulations. Ukraine said it has also received such invoices, and supported Russia's request for clarification with the proper authorities. Both asked that this subject be added to the agenda of the next OSCC meeting. Bulgaria swiftly passed the action to incoming OSCC Chair Canada.

REVCON Planning Group

16. (SBU) After the Plenary, the U.S. (Marvin) chaired the second meeting of the Informal Working Group on Planning the Review Conference (IWGPRC). As Chair of the REVCON, we are conducting outreach activities with relevant parts of the OSCE Secretariat to ensure that other elements dealing with crossover security issues are aware of the benefits of Open Skies. This approach is intended to support the OSCE concept of comprehensive security. In that regard, the U.S. drew attention to recent OSCE Ministerial Decisions with potential room for dialogue on Open Skies Treaty contributions:

--MC Decision 2/09: "Further OSCE Efforts to Address Transnational Threats and Challenges to Security and Stability";

--MC Decision 6/09: "Strengthening Dialogue and Cooperation on Energy Security in the OSCE Area."

17. (SBU) We also noted the upcoming February 2010 OSCE Workshop on "Protecting Non-Nuclear Critical Energy Infrastructures from Terrorist Attacks" organized by the Anti-Terrorism Unit (ATU). Comment: U.S. reps met with OSCE ATU head Raphael Perl to discuss the potential for Open Skies

USOSCE 00000289 002 OF 003

imagery to serve as a tool in evaluating protection of critical infrastructure. The ATU is considering including an Open Skies side-event for the workshop, or as a briefing to the OSCE Permanent Council Security Committee.

18. (SBU) With regard to Open Skies supporting security issues beyond arms control, Turkey said it wants to make sure such work does not take away from the Treaty's original focus, does not incur additional costs, and is voluntary in nature. Turkey suggested that it might be useful to have a working group formed, including experts from other security areas (e.g., infrastructure protection; climate change; energy), to discuss how these functions could be better incorporated into Open Skies missions. Turkey offered its aircraft for lease for non-Treaty flights focused on other security issues.

19. (SBU) The Czech Republic offered potential topics for REVCON discussion, including: creating a transition plan for the replacement of optical sensors with digital sensors by all States Parties; enlarging the number of States Parties to the Treaty; creating a system for a joint fleet of aircraft for use by multiple parties; forming partnerships with other global security organizations where Open Skies can add value; and finding ways for broader sharing of Open Skies imagery data. (Note: US Chair of the IWGS suggests that the Czech recommendation to replace all film systems with digital system be made a REVCON goal with a target date of 2020. Technology is moving quickly in this direction. We can achieve significant cost savings by retiring all film cameras and the associated chemical film processing equipment across the entire treaty.)

110. (SBU) Russia (Federyakov) noted that the Treaty has clearly not reached its potential yet. We need more discussions to determine how the Treaty can be used for other security purposes, either on a national basis or in cooperation with other international organizations. The question of payment for flights to cover other security issues should also be addressed. The first step could be to better disseminate information concerning the Treaty to other security-related sectors. We need to have a dialogue with such organizations to see if there is room for cooperation, and then figure out how to put into action.

111. (SBU) Sweden (Byren) pointed out that there are many things we can do with Open Skies Treaty platforms without

challenging the purpose of the Treaty. The most urgent issue is planning a transition to digital sensors, and to ensure they are deployed in the future. We should keep the core mission of the Treaty, and keep it simple regarding other areas.

¶12. (SBU) Luxembourg (Pilot) noted that it is increasingly difficult for Ministries of Defense to fund platforms for Open Skies flights, and perhaps they need to look for cooperation with other Ministries that are interested in other security issues. Burden-sharing of the Treaty platforms to cover multiple issues should be examined by national authorities.

¶13. (SBU) U.S. (Neighbour) supported the suggestions made, and confirmed that maximizing resources by reaching out to other ministries or organizations may provide opportunities for future funding, which in turn would allow the Treaty to continue in the future. The U.S. requested that all delegations continue to provide input for REVCON agenda and Final Document. The IWGPRC will meet again after the January or February OSCC meeting.

¶14. (SBU) In preparation for the REVCON, the U.S. also organized a separate meeting to brief Allied visiting Heads of Verification (HOV) reps on the imagery results of Open Skies. The briefing emphasized the importance of Open Skies imagery to the U.S., and stressed the need for transition to digital sensors. In a number of sidebars, it was clear that HOV reps grasped the importance of transition to digital sensors but have doubts about funding constraints. Many HOV reps said it is also difficult to obtain policy guidance from their MFA counterparts. We urged HOV reps to coordinate with the MFA in providing input for the REVCON. Comment: Many delegates welcomed additional coordination on a bilateral or small group basis as we advance toward the REVCON. End comment.

USOSCE 00000289 003 OF 003

IWGS Moves Forward on Digital Decisions

¶15. (SBU) From 7-12 December, the Informal Working Group on Sensors (IWGS) met to discuss the final outstanding points on the Revision One to Decision 14 for digital sensors (OSCC.SEN/6/09). Two main issues were resolved: a visual analysis reading rule was chosen, and the the pre-certification data requirement (number of data points) was agreed. There is one key issue remaining regarding the type and design of the resolution target. In order to move forward, delegates discussed the merit of reaching agreement on the use of just one type of target. Currently the Treaty requires a minimum of two-bars. The target design is important for proper determination of resolution. In addition, several states parties have cost concerns, and favor the use of a common target for use by all States for pre-certification data collection and certification events. A common target (and potential one or two common target locations) would provide the most reliable, consistent, and cost-effective results for all Parties.

¶16. (SBU) The U.S. Chair (Simmons) consulted with Germany about hosting a small test event in January to assist in resolving the target-related questions. The Netherlands, and other POD group members, primarily have two-bar targets, and expressed concerns about funding required to build new targets. The Chair will be consulting with several states in advance of the next meeting to facilitate Allied coordination. In addition, the U.S. provided test results from flights done in November for all delegates to review prior to the next meeting.

¶17. (SBU) The IWGS will meet again the week of February 15, and expects to finish working on the draft for digital sensors. It will also consider a companion draft decision for digital sensor data processing. In addition, OSCC Decision 17 on the format for digital exchange will expire at this month. U.S. reps are preparing to review and update this text as well. Lastly, Notification Format 4 was reviewed in conjunction with the Decision 14 text, and a draft is ready for further review.

¶18. (SBU) Mission understands that if the February IWGS

meeting is successful, the digital sensor decisions may be forwarded to the OSCC for adoption in March. Meeting this goal would greatly serve our policy interests in preparing for the REVCON.

German Aircraft Plans

¶19. (SBU) On the margins of several meetings, U.S. reps talked to a variety of German counterparts about its plans for fielding an aircraft in the future. Germany had not received any firm commitment from other Open Skies States to participate. The cost estimates without partners made the proposal unaffordable for Germany. In responding to the German offer to share a leased option with a commercial company, at least two states had to decline due to procurement regulations. Also, the new German Secretary of the Air Force has requested a comprehensive review of aircraft plans. German HOV General Mertens said there is a possibility to use some Airbus VIP jets. Germany will advise when it has a revised proposal for review.

FULLER